

A TEACHER IN A CROATIAN VILLAGE DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE INTERWAR PERIOD – THE EXAMPLE OF STANKO HORVATIN IN GRAČANI (1913 – 1933)

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The paper examines the life and work of Stanko Horvatin, the head teacher (principal) of the public/elementary school in Gračani, which changed its name several times during its existence. The central time frame covers the period from 1913 to 1933, when Horvatin was active in the Gračani area, but the paper also covers earlier and later phases of his life. On the basis of archive material, the paper analyzes various aspects of Horvatin's life, from pedagogical work at school, to social involvement, political positions and everyday existential problems in family life. Horvatin's biography clearly reflects the educational system and its influence on the life of a Croatian village during the First World War and the interwar period. The paper also shows the status of Croatian teachers in relation to the political changes and regimes they were exposed to, as well as the challenges they faced as a result. In a broader context, changes caused by modernization can be observed in the Croatian countryside of Northwestern Croatia during the researched period.

Keywords: Stanko Horvatin; Gračani; school; education; Croatian village; First World War; Interwar era

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Introduction

The development of modern elementary education in Croatia can be traced back to the passing of the school law in 1874 while Ivan Mažuranić¹ was a regional governor. With its entry into force, four-year elementary education became mandatory, with the possibility of refresher courses and practical classes.² Although the just-mentioned law provided the basic education in Croatia with modern foundations, it has been already maintained in earlier periods under the auspices of the Church and the nobility as founders. For example, in the villages of Zagrebačko Prigorje, located on the southern slopes of Medvednica, Markuševac, Remete and Šestine, the development of elementary education began in the mid-19th century.³ In 1859, the schools in Markuševac and Remete began to operate, and the school in Šestine opened its door in 1863. Considering the positive demographic trends that affected the villages of Gračani, Dolje, Zvečaj and Bliznec at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the priority of establishing a new school in Gračani arose.⁴ Its construction began in the spring of 1904, and it was ceremonially opened on the 21st of November of the same year.⁵ For the purpose of writing this paper, the elementary archive sources are based on the

¹ Dinko Župan, "Mažuranićeva reforma pučkoga školstva," in *Intelektualac, kultura, reforma: Ivan Mažuranić i njegovo vrijeme*, ed. Dalibor Čepulo, Tea Rogić Musa, and Drago Rokсандić (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu/Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2019.), 270-271.

² Emerik Munjiza, *Povijest hrvatskog školstva i pedagogije* (Osijek: Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku – Filozofski fakultet, 2009), 41.

³ A large number of papers have been published so far on the development of education in Markuševac, Remete and Šestine. See for example: Brankica Hercigonja, "Povijesni razvoj pučke škole u Remetama od 1859. do 1941." In *Pod okriljem Majke Božje Remetske – Zbornik radova u povodu 200. obljetnice utemeljenja župe Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije u Remetama: 1812. – 2012.*, ed. Jure Zečević, Antonio-Mario Ćirko, Vlado Čutura (Hrvatska karmelska provincija sv. oca Josipa, samostani bosonogih karmelićanki Udruge Bl. Alojzije Stepinac, Provincija karmelićanki Božanskoga Srca Isusova i Župa Uznesenja BDM u Remetama: Zagreb, 2016.), 148-155.; Mihaela Topolovec, "Povijesni razvoj pučkih/osnovnih škola na širem području grada Zagreba – documents of State Archives in Zagreb (1859. – 1945.). 2. part.", *Anali za povijest odgoja*, 5 (2005.): 145-155.; Zlatko Ivanović, ed., *150 godina Osnovne škole Remete* (Zagreb: Osnovna škola Remete, 2009.); Suzana Ruško, ed., *150 godina Osnovne škole u Šestinama 1863. – 2013.* (Zagreb: Osnovna škola Šestine, 2013).

⁴ Domagoj Novosel, "Demografska kretanja i stanovništvo župe Remete od 1812. do 1971.," in *Pod okriljem Majke Božje Remetske – Zbornik radova u povodu 200. obljetnice utemeljenja župe Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije u Remetama: 1812. – 2012.*, ed. Jure Zečević, Antonio-Mario Ćirko, Vlado Čutura (Hrvatska karmelska provincija sv. oca Josipa, samostani bosonogih karmelićanki Udruge Bl. Alojzije Stepinac, Provincija karmelićanki Božanskoga Srca Isusova i Župa Uznesenja BDM u Remetama: Zagreb, 2016.), 81-111.

⁵ Archives of Gračani Elementary School (AOŠG), Memorial, 2.

personal documents of Stanko Horvatin and the Memorials of the Gračani School, which for the most part he managed personally from 1913 to 1933. The teachers and professors personnel records (Official Papers/Personal Records) are stored in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb, alongside with the documents of Stanko Horvatin, his wife Katarina Horvatin, born Kružić and their son Berislav Horvatin.⁶ The Memorial of the Gračani school has been managed since the foundation of the school, and it was handled by head teachers, that is, in a later period, the principals of the school.⁷ An important source is the fund of the State Mixed Public School in Gračani, which contains the pedagogical documentation of the school and the general files of the school board in the period 1904 – 1945.⁸ A certain number of documents, mainly related to the school building itself, are also found in the municipal fund of the Administrative Municipality of Gračani – Remete on whose territory the school operated.⁹

Secondary archive sources are the Remete School Memorial¹⁰ and the Remete Parish Memorial.¹¹ All the above-mentioned sources comprise a rich pool of data in which teachers and priests, as members of the village elite, oversaw the course of events in the villages of their work and residence in a diary manner. As an elementary source, the Memorial of the Gračani school is a fundamental source in addition to the personalities of teachers Horvatin. Horvatin started managing the Memorial in the 1913/1914 school year upon taking office as Head teacher and completing it in the school year 1932/1933 after he resigned.¹² During the school year 1915/1916, the teacher Katarina Kružić was in charge of the Memorial, later she became Horvatin's spouse.¹³ In the Memorial, Stanko Horvatin writes down the state of the school, its role in educating students and the adult population, its significance for the village

⁶ Croatia (HR) – Croatian State Archives, Zagreb (HDA) – Record group (890), Popis personalnih dosjea djelatnika u prosvjeti i kulturi te članova njihovih obitelji (1890. – 1950.), [List of personnel files of employees in education and culture and their family members] Horvat – Hovanski 127/890.

⁷ AOŠG, Memorial, 1-130.

⁸ Croatia (HR) – State Archives in Zagreb (DAZG) – Record group (183), Državna mješovita pučka škola Gračani. [State Mixed Public school Gračani].

⁹ HR-DAZG-19, Upravna općina Gračani – Remete [Administrative municipality of Gračani].

¹⁰ HR-DAZG-187, Državna mješovita pučka škola u Remetama, Školska Memorial. [State Mixed Public school Remete].

¹¹ Archives of the Parish of Remete (further: AŽR), Memorial of the Parish of Remete I. (1890. – 1929.); Memorial of the Parish of Remete II. (1930 – 1963).

¹² AOŠG, 30.

¹³ AOŠG, 30.

of Gračani, everyday life and political reality. Skilled in expression, Horvatin left a rich opus of work for his biography through the Memorial during his service in Gračani, and his personal details complement personal data and provide a clear overview of his intense life and work. Through an overview of his twenty-year work in Gračani, not only his personal life path is clearly outlined, but also a picture of a teacher in the Croatian countryside during the First World War and the interwar period. Often neglected in Croatian historiography, teachers, along with local priests, were the only highly educated stratum of the population in the mentioned period and formed a kind of social elite.¹⁴ Precisely for this reason, their biographies are an important factor for understanding the life of the Croatian countryside in the time before the Second World War.

Childhood, education and service prior to arrival to Gračani

Stanko Horvatin was born in 1880 in Hrvatsko zagorje, Klanjec settlement and district/section of the same name, to father Mirko and mother Bara, born Hervačić.¹⁵ According to the entry in the Register of Births of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Klanjec, he was born on October 24 and baptized in the Parish church on the same day.¹⁶ The baptism was performed by the administrator of the Parish, Robert Dolinar, and the godparents at the baptism were Nikola Kraljić and Josipa Kraljić, born Stanivuković.¹⁷ Also, according to the entry written by himself in 1913 when he took over the position of Head teacher at the Gračani school, Stanko Horvatin was born on October 24th, 1880.¹⁸ The same date is mentioned in the sheet of the state census from 1931, which he personally filled out as a census enumerator.¹⁹

¹⁴ On biographies of individual teachers, see examples of following sources: Katarina Dimšić, "Petar Bogdešić (1863. – 1934.) – slavonski učitelj i zapisivač etnografske i folklorističke građe," *Radovi zavoda za znanstveni i umjetnički rad u Požegi*, 9 (2020.): 127-142.; Branko Ostajmer, "Đakovački učitelj Ivan Kocić Jergović," *Zbornik Muzeja Đakovštine*. (2017): 67-92.; Ivica Zvonar, "Prilog za životopis učitelja Marina Vlahovića," *Cris* 19, no. 1 (2017.): 109-113.

¹⁵ HR-HDA-1448-ZBMK: Zbirka matičnih knjiga i popisa obitelji, ZM-34E/142. [Collection of registers and families lists], Birth register of the Parish of Klanjec, 47-48.

¹⁶ HR-DAZG-19, Upravna općina Gračani – Remete [Administrative municipality of Gračani], Household lists from G to Z (Gračani, Remete, Zvečaj), Census of population, agricultural holdings and livestock from March 31, 1931, No 75.

¹⁷ HR-HDA-1448-ZBMK, ZM-34E/142, Birth Register of the Parish of Klanjec, 47-48.

¹⁸ AOŠG, Memorial, 26.

¹⁹ HR-DAZG-19 Household lists from G to Z (Gračani, Remete, Zvečaj), Census of population, agricultural holdings and livestock from March 31, 1931, No 75.

However, according to the Official Gazette preserved in his file, Horvatin was born two days earlier; on October 22nd, 1880.²⁰ The retirement decision on December 19, 1945 also lists the date of October 22, 1880 as Stanko Horvatin's date of birth.²¹ Another interesting discrepancy related to Stanko Horvatin is his personal name, i.e. the two versions used. Namely, in all his personal documents, Stanko is mentioned as his personal name. The same name is included in his signature in the school Memorial from 1913 to 1915.²² However, from 1916 to 1923, the name *Stanislav*²³ in the signature instead of the name *Stanko*.²⁴ After that, until 1933 and the end of his involvement with the school Memorial, the personal name Stanko appears again in the signature. His father Mirko, at the time of Stanko's birth, was a Head teacher in Klanjec, while his mother Bara was a housewife.²⁵ After completing four grades of elementary/public school in his native Klanjec, Stanko Horvatin moved to Varaždin, where he completed the four-year high school.²⁶ From 1896, he attended the Royal Male Teacher's School in Zagreb, where he passed the Maturity exam on June 26, 1900.²⁷

With regard to the School Act of 1888, that exam earned him the title and status of a *temporary teacher*.²⁸ Not long after that, on August 11, 1900, Horvatin was appointed a temporary teacher in the village of Prišlin in Croatian Zagorje, where he started teaching on September 1 of the same year.²⁹ In order to obtain permanent employment, Horvatin, like other temporary teachers, had to earn a *training certificate*, which was acquired through an exam after two years of service as a temporary teacher.³⁰ He secured the certificate on September 6, 1902, passing the training exam at the Royal Male Teacher's

²⁰ HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin.

²¹ HR-HDA-890, People's Government of Croatia, Ministry of Education, Personnel Department, No: 35708-II-On-1945.

²² AOŠG, Memorial, 26-28.

²³ Ibid., 30-51.

²⁴ Ibid., 52-80.

²⁵ Ibid., 52-80.

²⁶ HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Štefka Batinić, Sonja Gačina Škalamera, *Učitelji i učiteljice u Hrvatskoj 1849. – 2009.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski školski muzej, 2009.), 17.

²⁹ HR-HDA-890, Popis personalnih dosjea djelatnika u prosvjeti i kulturi te članova njihovih obitelji (1890. – 1950.), [List of personnel files of employees in education and culture and their family members], Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin, Decree of the Royal Land Government in Zagreb No, 13174.

³⁰ Š.Batinić, S. Gačina Škalamera, *Učitelji i učiteljice u Hrvatskoj 1849. – 2009.*, 17.

School in Zagreb, obtaining a good result.³¹ Based on the completed exams and the necessary qualifications, on October 21, 1902, Horvatin was appointed a permanent teacher in Prišlin, where he has already been working.³² He served in Prišlin until November 24, 1909, when he was transferred to the school in the village of Rečica near Karlovac.³³ In Rečica, on May 6, 1910, he was appointed Head teacher, i.e. school director with class teaching duties.³⁴ On October 4, 1911, he was appointed Head teacher of the Elementary School Zrin in Banovina.³⁵ Horvatin stayed in Zrin for less than two years, and already on August 30, 1913, he was appointed to the position of Head teacher at the school in Gračani near Zagreb.³⁶ He took up his post in Gračani on September 4 of the same year, which he personally recorded by briefly stating his biographical data in the school Memorial: "On September 4, 1913, the writer of these lines, Head teacher Stanko Horvatin, was transferred from Zrin to Gračani. He was born in Klanjec, Hrvatsko Zagorje, on October 24, 1880, where his father Mirko served as a Head teacher. After completing elementary education at his father's school and finishing the four-year high school in Varaždin, he attended The Royal Male Teacher's School in Zagreb from 1896/7 to 1899/1900, where he received a Certificate of Maturity on June 26, 1900 and a Training Certificate on September 6, 1902."³⁷

Service in Gračani from 1913 until the end of the First World War

Stanislav Horvatin takes over the position of Head teacher in Gračani from the previous Head teacher Marko Horvatić, who held that position for a very short time period from 1911 to 1913.³⁸ At the time of Horvatin's arrival, the Gračani school had the official name; Lower public school in Gračani.³⁹ Horvatin found the school building itself in solid condition, because it was

³¹ Ibid., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin,

³² Ibid., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin, Decree of the Royal Land Government in Zagreb, No. 16883.

³³ Ibid., No. 28122.

³⁴ Ibid., No. 9756.

³⁵ Ibid., No. 21501.

³⁶ Ibid., No. 15970.

³⁷ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 26.

³⁸ Domagoj Novosel, *Gračanska kronika* (Zagreb: Župa Gračani, 2008.), 105.

³⁹ M. Topolovec, "Povijesni razvoj pučkih/osnovnih škola na širem području grada Zagreba – dokumenti Državnog arhiva u Zagrebu (1859. – 1945.). 2. dio," *Analiza povijest odgoja*, 5 (2005.): 153.

practically a new building. The school had one classroom and a three-bedroom teacher's apartment.⁴⁰ At that time, the school had a school yard of 551 m², an orchard of 2010 m² and a garden of 934 m².⁴¹ Since its foundation in 1904, the school in Gračani was a single-grade school, which in practice meant holding classes for all four grades in one, morning shift. As early as 1907, the then Head teacher, Franjo Kovačić, and the local school board requested the expansion of the school into a double-grade school, i.e. the introduction of an afternoon shift, but their appeal remained unanswered.⁴² In 1911, the Royal County Board accepted the proposal of the Local School Board and expanded the school in Gračani to a double-shift school.⁴³ Despite this, due to the lack of space and teaching staff for two shifts, the said decision was not implemented.

On February 16, 1917, under persistent pressure from the Local School Board, but also from the Head teachers, the Royal Land Government made the final decision to expand the school in Gračani into a double-grade school.⁴⁴ The aforementioned decision introduced double-shift teaching in practice,

⁴⁰ Teacher's apartment in Remete 1) room length 5.3 meters, width 3.9 meters, height 3.6 meters, 2) room length 5.3 meters, width 4.5 meters, height 3.6 meters, 3) room length 5.3 meters, width 5.2 meters, height 3.6 meters. II. teacher's apartment in Remete 1) room length 4.2 meters, width 3.7 meters, height 3.6 meters. Teacher's apartment in Gračani 1) room length 5 meters, width 5 meters, height 3.8 meters, 2) room length 5 meters, width 5 meters, height 3.8 meters, 3) room width 5 meters, height 4 meters, height 3.8 meters. DAZG 19, General files, Teachers' apartments, 5th October 1928., 3155/1928., No 24.

⁴¹ *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac – Memorial 1907. – 1957.* (Gračani: HSPD Podgorac, 1957), 48.

⁴² AOŠG, Memorial, p. 30.

⁴³ M. Topolovec, "Povijesni razvoj pučkih/osnovnih škola na širem području grada Zagreba – dokumenti Državnog arhiva u Zagrebu (1859. – 1945.). 2. dio.," *Analiza povijest odgoja*, 5 (2005.): 153.

⁴⁴ "The most significant change this school year is the expansion of the school into a two-grade school. Already in the session of the school board held on 4. XI. In 1907, teacher Franjo Kovačić and the school board asked for the expansion of the school. The same issue was later discussed several times in school board sessions, thanks to teacher Marko Horvatić. At the session of the school board on 7.XII.1916. the subject was again put on the agenda, signed (Stanislav Horvatin). The matter was successful, because the application stated the decision of the Royal County Board of Directors dated 16.XI.1911, number 2537/1911, which determines the expansion of the Gračani one-grade school into a two-grade school and, due to a convenient proposal, that a new building does not have to be built, but to introduce undivided training without a weekly holiday, namely – that the teacher trains in the morning in the upper classes from 8 to 12 o'clock, and in the afternoon the teacher in the lower classes from 2 to 5 o'clock. Royal land government, Hall of Worship and Teaching by decision of 16.II.1917. No. 2549 allowed the expansion, and with the decision of 13.III.1917. No. 6834 appointed a temporary teacher in Bidrovac, Bogomira Tomanić, as a temporary teacher at that school". AOŠG, Memorial, 31.

which meant that the third and fourth grades attended classes from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., and the first and second grades from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.⁴⁵

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 quickly separated Stanko Horvatin from his newly assumed post in Gračani.⁴⁶ According to information from the Official Gazette, Horvatin was recruited on July 27, 1914, with the rank of sergeant, and spent a total of 2 years, 3 months and 18 days in the army, which were later included in his seniority.⁴⁷ From the aforementioned documentation, it is therefore evident that Horvatin was enlisted immediately during the first wave of partial mobilization at the outbreak of war.⁴⁸ After the military discharge, Horvatin left a short note about his war journey in the school Memorial, and the day of his enlisting date, which was a one day earlier than the one in the Official Gazette: "On December 5, 1916 the administration and training at that school was again taken over by the Head teacher Stanko Horvatin, who was in the army from July 26, 1914 to November 18, 1916. He was on the Russian battlefield from September 15, 1915 to September 23, 1916, as a sergeant with III/28th People's Ustasha Battalion, and the rest of the time he spent with the Royal Hungarian Zagreb 25th Home Guard Infantry Regiment, 2 reservist companies as a new recruits trainer."⁴⁹

During Horvatin's absence during the war, he was initially briefly replaced at his post by retired teacher Milan Engelsfeld.⁵⁰ In the school year 1915/1916, Horvatin will be replaced at the workplace by teacher Katarina Kružić, with whom he will later marry.⁵¹ Upon returning from the battlefield, in 1916, Horvatin was greeted by the village everyday life and war problems.⁵² Horvatin took over the management of the school and teaching activities on December 5, 1916. According to the records in the school Memorial, the start of classes

⁴⁵ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 31.

⁴⁶ For more about the reactions to the outbreak of the First World War in the villages of Zagrebačko Prigorje, see: Domagoj Novosel, "Godina 1914. u selima Zagrebačkoga prigorja," in *1914 – Prva godina rata u Trojedinj Kraljevini i Austro – Ugarskoj Monarhiji.*, ed. Vijoleta Herman Kaurić (Matica Hrvatska: Zagreb, 2018.), 515-525.

⁴⁷ HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890, Employment record of Stanko Horvatin

⁴⁸ For more on the mobilization of the population of Zagreb and its surroundings in the First World War, see: Marko Vukičević, *Zagreb 1914. – 1918. – Grad i stanovnici u Velikome ratu* (Zagreb: Despot Infinitus, 2020.), 50-57.

⁴⁹ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 30.

⁵⁰ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 28.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 29-31.

⁵² For more about the everyday life of the inhabitants of Gračani during the First World War, see: Domagoj Novosel, "Utjecaji Prvoga svjetskog rata na svakodnevicu stanovnika Gračana," *KAJ – časopis za književnost, umjetnost kulturu*, 241, no. 3-4 (2018.): 93-104.

was poor due to the war, but also various infectious diseases.⁵³ Most of the able-bodied men were on the battlefield, and children were increasingly used as labor in rural households, so attendance was irregular.⁵⁴ Already in the next school year 1917/1918, which was also burdened by the war, the start of classes began to improve, which teacher Horvatin recorded in the school Memorial: “The attendance and progress of the school youth was very good”.⁵⁵

In order to relieve as many students as possible of the grim reality of war, Horvatin, as a good pedagogue, tried to provide as many extracurricular activities as possible, taking students to nearby Medvednica, Mirogoj and the Natural History Museum.⁵⁶ In the last school year of the war, the school in Gračani was taught by a temporary teacher, Bogomira Tomanić, who left the service on September 23, 1919.⁵⁷ During the period 1913 – 1918, Horvatin, as Head teacher, was troubled by the problem of the school’s poor equipment. The above was not specific to the school in Gračani, but to all public schools in the then Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia.⁵⁸ At that time, the school owned a crucifix, a picture of His Majesty Francis Joseph, a clock and a map of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia.⁵⁹

Auxiliary teaching aids and inventory were gradually replenished, primarily thanks to donations from various benefactors, of which Count Miroslav Kulmer stood out in particular.⁶⁰ The school library was founded in 1907,

⁵³ AOŠG, Memorial, 30.

⁵⁴ In the First World War, 21 conscripts from the area of Gračani and the surrounding villages of Bliznec, Dolje and Zvečaj died. See more about the participation of the citizens of Gračani in the First World War Domagoj Novosel, *Jesen Prigorja – Stanovništvo Upravne općine Gračani – Remete 1918. – 1941.* (Zagreb: Despot Infinitus, 2019.), 51-59. In his war memories, Antun Šolc recalls the military leave he spent in Zagreb, and among other things, on December 14, 1917, he visited the “Kos” inn in Gračani and a very small number of men in the village: “I was with my father, Luja and Gustl in Gračani near Kos. The wine is weak, and there are few (m)uskars in the village.” Marko Vukičević, and Filip Hameršak, ed., *Antun Šolc – Ratna sjećanja 1914. – 1918.* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2020.), 201.

⁵⁵ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 34.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 44.

⁵⁸ Sanja Nekić, “Školski prostor i oprema,” in *Stoljeće djeteta u Hrvatskoj- Djetinjstvo i školovanje u 20. Stoljeću*, ed. Štefka Batinić, and Elizabeta Serdar (Zagreb: Hrvatski školski muzej, 2019.), 57.

⁵⁹ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 2.

⁶⁰ See more about Count Miroslav Kulmer in: Đurđica Jug, Gordana Radiček, Croatian Singing Society Sljeme Šestine. (Zagreb: Znanje, 2011) Count Miroslav Kulmer was born in 1860 in Šestine as the third son of Count Miroslav Kulmer and Countess Aleksandrina born Erdödy. He finished elementary school in Šestine and high school in Zagreb. He studied law in Zagreb and Vienna. After completing his studies, he returns to the estate in Šestine and runs

and until 1919, from the school's annual budget for the purchase of new books, 20 kronen was allocated.⁶¹ After returning from the battlefield, Horvatin was in charge of appropriation.⁶²

The Appropriation Committee was founded in 1915, and together with Horvatin as vice-president, the Parish priest of Remete, Leopold Rusan, as president, and the Head teacher at the school in Remete, Josip Tomičić, took part in it.⁶³ Horvatin was in charge of supplying the villages of Gračani, Bliznec, Dolje and Zvečaj, which were an integral part of his territory, and he did so during 1917 and 1918. The committee procured provisions through the National Supply in Zagreb.⁶⁴ In the time period from December 1, 1917 to July 30, 1918, a teacher from Gračani obtained 300 kilograms of corn for all four villages, and priority in distribution was given to families with small land holdings and too little grain income. The lack of fine flour, paraffin and sugar was most felt in the villages, and in his notes, Horvatin underlined the lack of sugar with thick lines in two places.⁶⁵ On Easter 1918 a slightly larger quantity arrived, but not enough for more than 15 dkg per person. Flour arrived irregularly and in small quantities. It was not until Easter 1918 that a slightly larger quantity arrived, but not enough for more than 15 dkg per person.⁶⁶ The engagement related to appropriation was very difficult for Horvatin, primarily emotionally. This is evidenced by a record from 1933 in which he recalled the war years: "He returned home from the war, and he was faced with even greater humdrum and trouble: appropriating for Gračani, Dolje, Zvečaj and

the family business. He often cooperates with Catholic missions, and he was also a member of the Croatian Parliament and a supporter of the Croatian-Serbian coalition. Exceptional mobility, restless spirit, activity in all fields – in economy, culture, sports – are the characteristics of Count Kulmer. He was a member of almost all societies of the then city of Zagreb. In most of them, he was among the board members or the president. As an exceptional businessman, he is the president of the Economic Society. Thanks to him, the Economic Exhibition in Zagreb in 1891 achieved extraordinary success and took on an international character. During its opening, it was performed only as the song "Lijepa naša domovino", later declared the Croatian national anthem by the decision of the Croatian Parliament. The conflict between Count Miroslav Kulmer and Ban Khuen Hedervary during the attempt to seize and devastate a part of the Historical Archives of Croatia can be particularly highlighted. He died in 1943.

⁶¹ *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac – Memorial 1907. – 1957.* (Gračani: Hrvatsko seljačko pjevačko društvo Podgorac, 1957.), 50.

⁶² For more about the appropriation of the population of Zagreb and its immediate surroundings during the First World War, see: Marko Vukičević, *Zagreb 1914. – 1918. – Grad i stanovnici u Velikome ratu.* (Zagreb: Despot Infinitus, 2020.), 82-89.

⁶³ AOŠG, Memorial, 32.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 36-37.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 36.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 78.

Bliznec. A bag of flour or sugar arrives for all four villages – so he sends notes to the children – 20 dkg per soul (person) several times. You can't please anyone – neither rich nor poor! That torment of Tantalus lasted the whole year of 1917 and 1918.⁶⁷

The weight of the work related to appropriation of the population and the justification of Horvatin's words were also confirmed by the president of the commission, Leopold Rusan: "On the 11th, 12th and 13th (of November) I held an appropriation. I was still weak from my illness, but for the sake of the people I tried that too. It is a terrible job, a thankless job, I would almost say freely that it is not for an honest man. I gave the profit that would have gone to me to the church, which thus received 434 kronen. I distributed sugar and flour."⁶⁸

The end of 1918 in Gračani, as well as in the rest of the country, was marked by the Spanish flu epidemic.⁶⁹ The disease claimed a total of 35 lives in the Remete Parish, to which Gračani belonged to.⁷⁰ Due to the Spanish flu epidemic from October 14 to 24, classes at the Gračani school were suspended, and four students succumbed to the disease: Marija Čegelj, Vid Ivko, Petar Krištof and Ruža Jelačić.⁷¹ In addition to Gračani, classes were temporarily suspended in neighboring Remete as well.⁷² Despite all the adversities caused by war and destruction, classes at the school in Gračani took place in accordance with the possibilities. At the end of the war, Stanko Horvatin welcomed a Head teacher to his workplace, which he will also hold in the new state creation: the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.⁷³

⁶⁷ AŽR, Memorial of the Parish of Remete (1890. – 1929.), no numeration.

⁶⁸ Ibid.,

⁶⁹ For more about the Spanish flu in Gračani, but also in the rest of the Zagrebačko Prigorje, see: Domagoj Novosel, "Španjolska gripa u selima Zagrebačkoga prigorja," *Konac Velikoga rata*. (Croatian state archive: Zagreb, 2020.), 327-337.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 330.

⁷¹ AOŠG, Memorial, 39.

⁷² HR-DAZG-187, Državna mješovita pučka škola u Remetama [State Mixed Public school Remete], School Memorial, without numeration.

⁷³ The new South Slavic state was originally called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in the Act of December 1st. With the promulgation of the Vidovdan Constitution in 1921, it was named the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Pedagogical and professional work in Gračani from the First World War to 1933

The turbulent post-war days caused a whole series of incidents and robberies in all parts of Croatia, including in the vicinity of Zagreb.⁷⁴ Parish property in Markuševac was looted, and military fugitives stole 200 kronas from the pastor of Šestine, Matija Miletić.⁷⁵ In Gračani, Remete's neighboring village, inhabitants robbed the apartment of teacher Josip Tomičić and forced him to flee the village.⁷⁶ Despite the turbulent environment, Stanko Horvatin did not experience a similar fate in Gračani, and he survived the socio-political changes and the establishment of the new regime without personal inconvenience.

After the restless and uncertain war and post-war years, Horvatin, like the other teachers in the school year of 1919/1920 could finally dedicate himself to his educational profession and pedagogical work. Until the school year of 1926/1927, classes were held according to the old curriculum adopted from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.⁷⁷ Then, in 1926, the Unified Plan and Program for the entire Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was adopted.⁷⁸ Also, until 1929, the old school law from 1888 was in force, and the new one defined elementary education as compulsory and free throughout the country.⁷⁹ According to the new school law, elementary school education lasted for four years, and children attended classes in religious studies, mother tongue; Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian for seven hours a week in all four grades, initial real teaching (instructing children about order and rules in the school community, observations from the field of spiritual life), in the third and fourth grades it is divided into geography, history and natural science; then there is calculus with geometric shapes, needlework – male and female, calligraphy, singing and gymnastics with children's games.⁸⁰ Special attention was paid to the so-called *refresher course*, classes taken after four years of elementary education by those children who did not continue their education in any of

⁷⁴ See more: Domagoj Novosel, "Refleksije na zbivanja 1918. u selima Zagrebačkoga prigorja," in *1918. – 2018. Povijesni prijevori i Hrvatska danas. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa*, eds. Vlatka Vukelić, Mijo Beljo, and Vlatko Smiljanić (Zagreb: Fakultet hrvatskih studija Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2020.), 165-190.

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 170-171.

⁷⁶ HR-DAZG-187, School Memorial, without numeration.

⁷⁷ Dubravka Miljković, "Iz povijesti osnovne škole u Hrvatskoj u razdoblju od 1918. do 1941.," *Odgojne znanosti* 9, no. 1 (2007.): p. 139.

⁷⁸ E. Munjiza, *Povijest hrvatskog školstva i pedagogije*, 49.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

⁸⁰ Miljković, "Iz povijesti osnovne škole u Hrvatskoj u razdoblju od 1918. do 1941.," 139-140.

the secondary or vocational schools. Since the lessons were attended by older children, who were already engaged on the family farms, attendance was often careless, so the lessons lost their meaning and soon disappeared from school institutions.⁸¹

The issue of equipping students and the school itself with teaching materials and resources was constantly present throughout the entire period of the first half of the 20th century. The students' basic teaching tool was a textbook/reading book, the cover of which was decorated with the image of the ruler Franz Joseph I, or later King Aleksandar Karađorđević.⁸² Along with it, the students used the so-called calculus table and catechism, a writing board with pebbles and a sponge for erasing.⁸³ But even such modest school supplies and teaching materials were not fully available to all students until the end of the twenties. Only in the school year of 1928/1929, Horvatin noted: "School youth have been equipped with books and stationery as early as August 15."⁸⁴

Although the new curriculum primarily served the monarchist regime in raising loyal subjects, Horvatin was satisfied with the new legal provision, which defined teachers as civil servants from December 1919.⁸⁵ Already at the end of 1918, Horvatin complained in the school Memorial about the poor economic status of teachers in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and indicated that he expected a solution to this in the new state union: "Teachers all over Croatia are very dissatisfied, because they struggle with their low salaries (116 kronen per month and 100 kronen in war allowance per month). All professions, except teaching, had advanced in salaries. A teacher cannot afford a suit, it costs up to 2,000 Kronen. Even Municipal scribes (with a public school as their only education) in this municipality have a monthly salary of 300 kronen, barber assistants in Zagreb from 700 kronen to 1000 kronen a month, etc. The teaching profession has just been burned to the core, as can be seen from there, because over 300 Croatian teachers have applied for service on railways, post offices and the military. Of course, they did not get those and thus the indignation increased even more. Let's hope that this vital issue for

⁸¹ Ibid., 142.

⁸² Štefka Batinić, Elizabeta Serdar, ed., *Stoljeće djeteta u Hrvatskoj – Djetinjstvo i školovanje u 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Hrvatski školski muzej, 2019.), 40-41.

⁸³ Božena Kolar – Dedović, ed., *100 godina škole u Gračanima*, (Zagreb: Osnovna škola Gračani, 2004.), 14.

⁸⁴ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 65.

⁸⁵ For example, Hrvoje Matković believes; "Thus, the school policy was only a part of the general policy, namely that which represented state centralism," in Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Jugoslavije* (Drugo, dopunjeno izdanje). (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 2003.), 218.

Yugoslavia will be resolved as soon as possible, to the satisfaction of national teachers. Without good teachers, no country can progress.”⁸⁶

Horvatin’s claims and complaints were not without foundation. The school law from 1888 reduced the social rights of teachers and partially limited their freedoms; salaries were lowered, the working life was extended from 30 to 40 years, and female teachers who would get married were considered to have left their service with intention.⁸⁷ In addition, it should be noted that teachers’ salaries at that time were among the lowest in Europe.⁸⁸ Horvatin’s hopes of improving the teachers’ social rights were soon fulfilled, as he commented with undisguised enthusiasm: “Since December 1, 1919, a teacher has been a civil servant with a basic salary of 2,400 dinars, which amounts to 9,600 kronen. Every 3 years, a teacher’s salary would increase by 300 dinars or 1,200 kronen. There are 8 such increases of 300 dinars each, while the last one is 200 dinars. A teacher therefore retires with 5,000 dinars or 20,000 kronen after 32 years of service. Wood tax and other incomes, garden, etc., remain. Thus, our young country Yugoslavia settled the teacher issue so quickly, whereas in the former Austria-Hungary, Croatian teachers fought unsuccessfully for ten years to become civil servants. The infamous governor, Khuen-Héderváry, had a law drawn up, according to which a substitute teacher position pays 50 kronen, a temporary teacher position 58 kronen, and permanent position 66 kronen.”⁸⁹

Although teachers’ salaries have grown significantly compared to the pre-war period, the rise in food prices also caused the need for higher financial expenditures. For this reason, the state authorities introduced the so-called *high-cost allowance*, with which each teacher received 64 kronen per day, and for the wife and each child an additional 12 kronen. Unmarried teachers received the same amount, and married teachers 30 kronen.⁹⁰ In the school year of 1921/1922, the upward trend in the prices of basic groceries and consumer goods continued. Each teacher received a daily allowance of 22 dinars from the state as a personal high-cost allowance and 5 dinars for the family. Married female teachers received half the amount and did not receive any family allowance.⁹¹ Generally speaking, it can be concluded that the financial status of teachers has improved compared to the pre-war period. For example, Stanko Horvatin in the school year 1923/1924 received a total of 27,840 dinars in salary. Of that amount, 9,240 dinars related to the basic salary, 6,600 dinars

⁸⁶ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 43.

⁸⁷ E. Munjiza, *Povijest hrvatskog školstva i pedagogije*, p. 43.

⁸⁸ Š.Batinić, S. Gačina Škalamera, “Učitelji i učiteljice u Hrvatskoj 1849. – 2009.,” 82.

⁸⁹ AOŠG, Memorial, 44.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹¹ AOŠG, Memorial, 53.

to the position salary and 12,000 dinars to the personal cost allowance. In the mentioned school year, his average salary was 2,320 dinars.⁹² From September 1, 1927, Horvatin's basic salary was increased again, although it is not clear from the source by what percentage.⁹³ On September 1, 1932, Horvatin's salary was increased by 15%.⁹⁴ He received his last raise during his service in Gračani, i.e. promotion to a higher pay grade, on October 22, 1932.⁹⁵

During the interwar service in Gračani, Horvatin received an *excellent* grade every time from the inspection and supervision, as the highest possible grade recorded by supervisors from the local or national level.⁹⁶ In the descriptive part of the evaluation, Horvatin is characterized as *exemplary* in dedication to work and *excellent* in didactic and methodical preparation.⁹⁷ According to the inspection's findings, he was *good and kind* to schoolchildren.⁹⁸ In the later memoirs written by the students of the Gračani school at the time, Horvatin was remembered as a good and fair teacher, but the one who did not shy away from physically punishing students, which was in accordance with the pedagogical practice of the time.⁹⁹

For example, Mirko Banek, a student at the time, describes the educational methods that Stanko Horvatin applied to his students in great detail in his notes: "Our teacher Stanko Horvatin was good and mild-tempered, but also strict when needed. We, children, were good and obedient students, but there were also mischievous ones who would get spanked. They would get either slapped or spanked, and some even knelt in the corner. One morning, student Jurica Štrosar was late for class, and since he didn't see the teacher putting wood in the stove, he greeted a class saying *good evening*. The teacher looked at him and said: *Is that how you greet in the morning and you're also late?* Then he placed him in front of the class and started pulling his hair. Jurica stood on tiptoe and started whimpering. The teacher said to him: *You are a calf. Will you still behave like that?* No, Mr. Teacher, answered Jurica. He then sent him back to his seat and told him not to be tardy anymore. He also placed him into detention, which was in the classroom, and he stayed last

⁹² HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment Record of Stanko Horvatin, Decree of the Grand Prefect of the Zagreb Region, No. 24564.

⁹³ Ibid., No. 67181.

⁹⁴ Ibid., Annual reviews.

⁹⁵ Ibid., Annual reviews.

⁹⁶ Ibid., Annual reviews.

⁹⁷ Ibid., Annual reviews.

⁹⁸ Ibid., Annual reviews.

⁹⁹ Batinić, and Serdar, eds., *Stoljeće djeteta u Hrvatskoj – Djetinjstvo i školovanje u 20. stoljeću*, 43.

in the school and had to be there for as long as the teacher took pity and let him go home.”¹⁰⁰

In the interwar period in the Croatian countryside, school was still not considered necessary for all children, especially girls. For the most part, children were seen primarily as labor, and class attendance was often irregular.¹⁰¹ Continuing education after completing first four grades was practically impossible for village children. However, the peasants of the Zagreb area were directed primarily to the city of Zagreb and its economic possibilities in their economy and livelihood, so their awareness of the significance and importance of their children’s education was at a higher level than among peasants in the province. Therefore, it is not surprising that already after the First World War, parents from Gračani sent boys to learn various trades and continue their education, which teacher Horvatin praised in his record from 1921: “In recent times, a large number of young men from Gračani go to Zagreb to learn any trade. This is an all the more joyful phenomenon, because until now no one wanted to learn a trade. The reason for this is that the properties are quite small due to continuous divisions. The peasant saw that it was enough if he kept one son at home.”¹⁰²

In the mid-twenties, part of the students from Gračani continued their education in Zagreb’s higher schools, which Horvatin once again praised with a note from the school year 1924/1925: “It is worth mentioning that our peasantry also decided to send children from Gračani to higher schools in Zagreb, which was previously considered the greatest rarity. Now the following students attend Zagreb higher schools: Juraj and Vid Đurak (father Ivan), Vlado and Stjepan Šelendić (father Ivan), Viktor Đurak (father Stjepan), Dragutin Šelendić (father Juraj), Vinko Kranjec (father Jakob), Dragutin Ivančić (father Josip). Of these, two passed with distinction, four with a good first class, and two with a remedial.”¹⁰³

The above-mentioned records actually show the good relationship of the teacher Stanko Horvatin with his students’ parents, towards whom he always showed affection and spoke words of praise. But Horvatin’s cooperation with parents wasn’t just to talk the talk. Through his activities, he often humanitarily helped parents and children of lower financial status, enabling them to receive particularly better health care. Thus, for example, in the school year

¹⁰⁰ Kolar – Dedović, ed., *100 godina škole u Gračanima*, 16.

¹⁰¹ Suzana Leček, *Seljačka obitelj u sjeverozapadnoj Hrvatskoj 1918. – 1941.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest – Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje u Slavonskom Brodu – Srednja Europa, 2003.), 375-377.

¹⁰² AOŠG, Memorial, 47.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 55.

1927/1928, he pledged for the deaf-mute boy Ladislav Đuran, whose father, as a poor weaver, could not pay for his treatment at the Institute for Deaf-Mute Persons. Through the intervention of Stanko Horvatin, the District Board of the Zagreb Region provided an annual sum of 6,000 dinars for accommodation and treatment of Ladislav Đuran.¹⁰⁴ In the same school year, thanks to his acquaintances, Horvatin was able to enable the treatment of a sick student, Mirko Poslek. The boy lived alone with his elderly grandfather in a dilapidated hut in the Gračani area. As social cases, they were unable to provide even basic living conditions. After contracting tuberculosis, Poslek was hospitalized in the Brestovac sanatorium at the intervention of teacher Horvatin.¹⁰⁵ The following school year, Horvatin interceded for the seriously ill student Ivan Banić, who had become deaf and blind in one eye. Due to the genetic link with the father, a chronic alcoholic, the child was also anemic. Ivan Banić was hospitalized in Zagreb, and at Horvatin's insistence, the administrative municipality of Gračani-Remete covered the costs of the treatment.¹⁰⁶ In the school year 1929/1929 in addition to the Banić case, there were two more serious cases of school children's illnesses, for which the teacher advocated. Horvatin understood his position very well, not only as a teacher, but also as an educated person in the countryside, which was a very rare phenomenon in that period. He knew that the parents of his students were mostly uneducated peasants, who often did not know how to recognize the symptoms of the disease, nor did they turn to doctors when the illness progressed.¹⁰⁷

Most often, they were not able to financially cover the costs of treatment or reach a doctor in Zagreb. Because of this, he was the link that connected parents with doctors, and he often managed to ensure that the costs of treatment did not fall on the backs of the parents or guardians of the child, but on a certain institution or local authorities. His record from the end of the 1928/1929 school year best shows how he understood his role as a teacher in the countryside, but also of all rural teachers in general: "These three cases were mentioned to be motivational especially for teachers, who should keep a watchful eye on the sick children of their school. This is necessary in the city, but much more so in the village, where parents of sick children should be assisted with abundant advice and instructions for help."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 62.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 62.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 67.

¹⁰⁷ For more about health care in Gračani in the first half of the 20th century, see: Domagoj Novosel, "Zdravstveni i higijenski uvjeti u selima Zagrebačkoga prigorja u prvoj polovici 20. Stoljeća," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 53, no. 1 (2021): 221-242.

¹⁰⁸ AOŠG, Memorial, 67.

In addition to the education of children, teachers in the first half of the 20th century actively worked on the literacy of adults. Prior to the First World War, more precisely in 1912, a literacy course was organized in the Gračani school.¹⁰⁹ Illiteracy was also a chronic problem in the Yugoslav state in the interwar period.¹¹⁰ But the situation in the area of Gračani was much more favorable. So, for example, when the municipal authorities asked the school director to state the number of illiterate adults in 1928, Horvatin responded with an official letter stating: “There are no illiterates in the area of this school, except for those who are mentally disabled and could not even finish the first grade in three years”.¹¹¹

Two years later – in 1930, according to the municipal census, it is stated that there are a total of 19 illiterate persons under the age of 25 in the entire Administrative Municipality of Gračani – Remete.¹¹² Of that number, nine were from the enrollment area of the school in Gračani. The list mentions health problems as the cause of illiteracy for two people, while there is no mention of the others. An almost negligible number of illiterate people testified to the good work of the teachers at the school in Gračani, led by the Head teacher Stanko Horvatin. Analyzing Horvatin’s pedagogical and professional work during the interwar period, his professionalism and concern for socially and health-impaired students was evident from all indicators, which often exceeded his legally set obligations.

Worldview and socio-political activity

Stanko Horvatin was born into a large family with a total of ten children. His parents, Mirko and Bara, tried to provide their children with the best possible education, and the fact that they were educated people certainly contributed to this. According to certain data, and based on the later biographies of

¹⁰⁹ M. Topolovec, “Povijesni razvoj pučkih/osnovnih škola na širem području grada Zagreba – dokumenti Državnog arhiva u Zagrebu (1859. – 1945.). 2. dio,” *Analiza povijest odgoja*, 5 (2005.): 153.

¹¹⁰ According to the population census from 1921, as many as 50.5% of the country’s inhabitants were illiterate, while according to the population census of Yugoslavia from 1931, that number only slightly decreased to 44.6% illiterate. H. Matković, *Povijest Jugoslavije* (Drugo, dopunjeno izdanje), 217.

¹¹¹ HR-DAZG-19, Upravna općina Gračani – Remete, [Administrative municipality of Gračani] General files. The administration of the state elementary school in Gračani, the municipal administration of Gračani in Remete, 10.th September 1928., No. 121/1928., No. 24.

¹¹² HR-DAZG-19. General files. List of all illiterate persons in the municipality of Gračani under the age of 25, Remete, December 18, 1930, No. 27.

Stanko's brothers and sisters, the spirit of enthusiasm for the labor movement as well as the idea of South Slavic unity prevailed in the family. In this sense, Stanko's youngest brother, Kamilo Horvatin, will stand out the most, who will become one of the leading figures of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the interwar period.¹¹³ Their sister Dragica, married Hegedušić, was the wife of Lovro Hegedušić from Hlebine, and the mother of the later famous Croatian artist Krsto Hegedušić.¹¹⁴ According to family memories, in the circle of the Horvatin family, revolutionary songs were sung, among others the French Marseillaise, and during the Russo-Japanese War there was enthusiasm among children for Russia.¹¹⁵ It is difficult to say how much all of the mentioned factors influenced Stanko Horvatin's later political outlook. What can be determined with certainty regarding the political options that Stanko Horvatin favored during his service, are the records he left behind in the Gračani School Memorial. In the school year 1932/1933, just before leaving his post at the Gračani school, Horvatin briefly described his political views before the First World War and how they influenced his service: "On the occasion of the state elections in 1911, as an oppositionist and an opponent of the Magyars, he was transferred for service – actually as a punishment – to Zrin, county Dvor, Banovina, whereto he had to leave within 24 hours (December 11). He was transferred to the denunciation of the county chief Tomislav Matanić. Zrin is over 15 kilometers from the center of the Dvor county, and even more from the Bosanski Novi railway station. He has served there for two years as in proper exile."¹¹⁶

After he was moved to Gračani in 1913, Stanko Horvatin's mother Bara joined him soon in Gračani. His brother Kamilo Horvatin was accused in 1912 and sentenced to two years in prison, as an accomplice in the assassination of Governor Slavko Cuvaj.¹¹⁷ After serving his sentence in June 1914, Kamilo Horvatin also came to Gračani to live with his brother Stanko. He spent most of the war years in Gračani, mostly avoiding military service at the beginning of the war. At the end of the war Kamilo studied in Zagreb

¹¹³ See more about the life and work of Kamil Horvatin in: Stefan Gužvica, „Kamilo Horvatin: Zaboravljeni kandidat za generalnog sekretara Komunističke partije Jugoslavije”. *Historijski zbornik*, LXXII (2019.), 1: 139-164., Marko Zovko, *Kamilo Horvatin* (Zagreb: Spektar, 1980).

¹¹⁴ On the relationship between the Horvatin and Hegedušić families, see: Dragutin Feletar, "Podravec Krsto Hegedušić – marginalije uz jedan buran životopis," *Podravski zbornik*, no. 2 (1975.): 89-94.

¹¹⁵ M. Zovko, *Kamilo Horvatin*, 7-8.

¹¹⁶ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 78.

¹¹⁷ S. Gužvica, "Kamilo Horvatin: Zaboravljeni kandidat za generalnog sekretara Komunističke partije Jugoslavije," *Historijski zbornik* 72, no. 1 (2019.): 141.

at the Trade School.¹¹⁸ In addition to studying, he spent the last years of the war socializing with communist champions August Cesarec and Đuro Cvi-jić and organizing the labor movement.¹¹⁹ After 1918, Kamilo Horvatin left Gračani and his brother Stanko and went to Zagreb to live with his sister Dragica Hegedušić.¹²⁰ Interestingly, Stanko Horvatin does not record any information about the residence of his mother Bara and brother Kamilo in his teacher's apartment in Gračani, although he often recorded information from his private life. Due to the lack of sources, we cannot know whether the Horvatin brothers shared the same political worldview, but judging by their later life paths, we can conclude that they diverged in this respect. Kamilo Horvatin became one of the champions of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, an active politician who left Yugoslavia in 1929 and died in 1938 in the USSR during the Stalinist purges.¹²¹

On the other hand, Stanko Horvatin, judging by the records during his service in Gračani, remained faithful to the monarchist organization of the state. The school Memorial is full of the teacher's praises for the state, the regime and the Karadžević dynasty. All national holidays, birthdays of members of the royal family, as well as their arrivals in Zagreb are recorded. Stanko Horvatin welcomes the disintegration of Austria-Hungary with undisguised delight and satisfaction: "October 29, 1918 will forever be written in golden letters in the history of the Croatian people! On that very day, the parliament of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia concluded the secession of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia from Austria and Hungary. At that hour, the unfortunate settlement, which has oppressed our poor people since 1868, disappears! That unfortunate regime, where you were not allowed to think for yourself, whereas as an official you were persecuted if you did not vote during the election for the Magyar candidate, ends."¹²²

The records clearly show Horvatin's anti-Magyar attitude, against the Croatian-Hungarian settlement, and his oppositional nature, which caused him problems in his previous career. The unification of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs with the Kingdom of Serbia, and the creation of a joint South Slavic state, was also accompanied by a slightly euphoric note in which he particularly critically referred to the Habsburg dynasty: "On December 5, 1918 Yugoslavia or the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed

¹¹⁸ M. Zovko, *Kamilo Horvatin*, 18-19.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 19.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 19.

¹²¹ S. Gužvica, "Kamilo Horvatin: Zaboravljeni kandidat za generalnog sekretara Komunističke partije Jugoslavije," *Historijski zbornik* 72, no. 1 (2019.): 159-161.

¹²² AOŠG, Memorial, 42.

with King Peter I from the house of Karadorđević. We finally got rid of the rule of the Habsburgs, who, although they ruled our nation since January 1, 1527, still did nothing good for the Croats! History clearly tells you that. We owe our freedom to the victory of the Entente over the Central Powers. The infamous Austro-Hungarian monarchy, where two nations, German and Hungarian, ruled over all others, completely disintegrated”.¹²³

Horvatin did not hide his enthusiasm for South Slavic unity: “Three brothers: Serb, Croat and Slovene, separated, fragmented and oppressed throughout the centuries, are finally united in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.”¹²⁴ In his work, Horvatin often referred to events from the past, which marked the history of Croats and Serbs, looking for a link with the current time. Thus, for example, on June 28, 1932 during the celebration of the Vidovdan national holiday, he gave an introductory speech at the school, which was attended not only by students and teachers, but also by representatives of the local government, the school board and pastor Leopold Rusan. He wrote a summary of his speech and a description of the entire event in the school Memorial: “The celebration itself was opened with an appropriate speech by Head teacher Stanko Horvatin. Among other things, he highlighted the historical fact that on June 28, 1839, Croats also fought on the Kosovo field under the leadership of the famous Croatian hero Ivaniš Horvat, then the master of Mačva. He also pointed out that the Bosnian king Stjepan Tvrtko I sent his army under Duke Vlatko Vuković (Duke Vladeta) to help the Serbian prince, Lazar. Here is an example of beautiful brotherly harmony and love! The deaths of Serbia in Kosovo dragged Bosnia into ruin in 1463, and then the destruction of Croatia on the Krbavsko polje in 1493.”¹²⁵

In all his writings and speeches, Horvatin insisted on the notion of brotherhood and unity between all the peoples of Yugoslavia, especially Croats and Serbs. Events that could not possibly be connected with the service of the Head teacher in the elementary school also found a place in the school Memorial. Thus, on October 6, 1930, he recorded the following: “In Belgrade, on that day, by the order of His Majesty King Alexander I, all regiments of all branches of the army received new Yugoslav flags, while the old famous Serbian flags from the Balkan war with the Turks and the Bulgarians, as well as those from the World War, were stored with great ceremonies in the endowment of King Peter I. of the Great Liberator – in the church in Oplenac.”¹²⁶

¹²³ Ibid., 42.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 43.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 76.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 71.

Horvatin's actions were not limited to words, but together with his students, he actively participated in the receptions of the royal family and high-ranking representatives of the Zagreb government. On October 22, 1930, the Prime Minister General Petar Živković visited the administrative municipality of Gračani – Remete. His arrival was part of a visit to the city of Zagreb. This event attracted a lot of attention in the entire municipality, and Horvatin attended with students in national costumes.¹²⁷ Shortly after, in January 1931, King Aleksandar Karađorđević visited Zagreb with his wife, Queen Maria. On that occasion, the royal family made trips to the surroundings of Zagreb, Remete and Šestine.¹²⁸ Horvatin took his students to Zagreb again, where they welcomed dignitaries in national costumes.¹²⁹ Although the teachers tried to show the enthusiasm of the Zagreb area population for the arrival of the royal couple in Zagreb, the fact is that the main bearers of social activities in the villages, namely the singing societies, did not want to participate in the events.¹³⁰ In September of the same year, Horvatin, together with his colleague Andrija Mihaljević, Head teacher of the neighboring Remete school, took the school children to Zagreb to welcome Queen Maria and

¹²⁷ Andrija Mihaljević, the head teacher of the neighboring Remete school, also left a record of the cordial visit of the Prime Minister, General Petar Živković to the Gračani-Remete Municipality: "In September of that year, the Prime Minister of the Royal Government, Mr. Pera Živković, came for a short stay in Zagreb. By that chance, he also visited our place, where he was welcomed by many people with great cheers. Mr. President stayed for a short time among the peasants observing our beautiful national costume and customs, and he himself entered the folk circle and danced it together with the peasants. The people really liked the democratic gesture of Mr. President, so they saw him out of his place in even greater rapture and enthusiasm." HR-DAZG-187, Remete School Memorial, no numeration

¹²⁸ The visit of the royal couple of the Karađorđević dynasty to the administrative municipality of Gračani – Remete and to neighboring Šestine, was also recorded by Andrija Mihaljević, head teacher of the Remete school: on January 25, His Majesty the King and Queen came for a longer stay. From Zagreb, our sovereigns made short trips to the near and far surroundings of Zagreb. Her Majesty the Queen drove several times through Remete, and His Majesty the King on 1.II.1931. came to Šestine to attend a peasant wedding. Many people from Remete also went to Šestine to magnify that great national celebration, which by chance the king presented the newlyweds with gold ducats. Our King and Queen stayed in Zagreb for 11 days, and on 4. II [February] in 1931, they left Zagreb, with a nice farewell from the Zagreb population. Upon leaving, the King called out to the people of Zagreb: See you soon." HR-DAZG-187, Remete School Memorial, no numeration.

¹²⁹ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 72.

¹³⁰ The Croatian Peasant Society Podgorac from Gračani and the Croatian Peasant Singing Society Frankopan from Remete did not want to take part in the reception of King Alexander and Queen Maria in Zagreb, and the Croatian Peasant Singing Society Sljeme from Šestine ultimately refused to sing for the King on the occasion of his visit to Šestine. For this reason, it was temporarily banned and dissolved in 1931. Novosel, *Jesen Prigorja – Stanovništvo Upravne općine Gračani – Remete 1918. – 1941.*, 382-383.

Prince Peter during the consecration of the flag of the Adriatic Guard.¹³¹ All activities carried out by Stanko Horvatin must also be seen in the context of the time during which they took place, and which were inevitably influenced by political forces. Although he was undoubtedly a supporter of South Slavic unity and supported the creation of a new state union, as a leading teacher and civil servant he had to adhere to prescribed state holidays and celebrations. It should be remembered that the teaching profession was under great pressure from the regime, which sought to completely control all areas of life, where education was an important factor. This was especially felt in the period 1920-1922, that is, 1924-1925, when the minister of education was Svetozar Pribičević, at that time a supporter of unitary and an opponent of federalist ideas.¹³² The pressure on teachers increased especially after the introduction of the dictatorship of King Alexander on January 6, 1929, when centralist and unitary ideas were further strengthened.¹³³

Those teachers who tried to resist the tendencies of unitary were subjected to pressure, early retirement or even dismissal, because they were characterized as unfit.¹³⁴ Entries in school records and student work were under constant inspection. Special care was taken to ensure that the teacher had Yugoslav ideas, which was one of the evaluation criteria, and in which Horvatin was positively evaluated.¹³⁵ In addition to the pressure of the regime, which expected complete loyalty from teachers, teachers in the Croatian countryside were exposed to pressure from the population, which in that period overwhelmingly sided with the opposition parties, primarily the Croatian Peasant Party.¹³⁶ The villages of the Zagreb Highlands were a strong base of the Croatian Peasant Party, often visited by party leaders Stjepan Radić and Vladek Maček. Thus, for example, Stjepan Radić held three large gatherings in Gračani in 1920, 1922 and 1923, where a large number of inhabitants of the

¹³¹ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 74.

¹³² See more about the life and work of Svetozar Pribičević in: Hrvoje Matković, *Svetozar Pribičević* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1995).

¹³³ By introducing the dictatorship, an attempt was made to cancel all national characteristics and artificially create a Yugoslav nation. Accordingly, cultural, sports and other associations bearing a national symbol were prohibited. For example, the "Union of Croatian Teachers" and the "Association of Croatian High School Teachers" were abolished. Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999), 88.

¹³⁴ Bosiljka Janjatović, *Politički teror u Hrvatskoj 1918. – 1935.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2002.), 55.

¹³⁵ HR-HDA-890, HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment Record of Stanko Horvatin, Annual reviews.

¹³⁶ See more about the Croatian Peasant Party in: Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Hrvatske seljačke stranke* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1999).

Zagrebačko prigorje gathered, but we do not find records of this in the school Memorial.¹³⁷ Given that all of Radić's gatherings took place in the immediate vicinity of the school and the teacher's apartment, and were attended by a large number of residents, it is impossible that Horvatin did not notice the events. That the teaching profession was in a sort of anvil between the regime on the one hand and the expectations of the majority of the peasantry on the other, is best illustrated by the event of 1925. In the mentioned year, the thousandth anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom was celebrated in the Croatian regions. Memorial plaques were placed across the country in memory of the Croatian King Tomislav, and the jubilee was marked in numerous other ways. The Brotherhood of the Croatian Dragon Society was the host of the public celebration.¹³⁸ The celebration was to be organized as an outdoor event, and the bearer in rural areas was to be a Catholic clergy to whom a circular was sent.¹³⁹ Such was the case in Remete, the center of the Parish to which the citizens of Gračani belonged. Remete Parish priest, Leopold Rusan, as an extremely anti-regime-oriented person, accepted the organization of this event and invited the entire Parish community to the celebration.¹⁴⁰ Along with the folk, the pastor invited both Head teachers from his Parish and the rest of the teachers' faculty to the celebration.

The record left by Leopold Rusan in the Parish Memorial of Župa Remete perhaps best describes the circumstances of the education in Croatia at that time: "July 1925... Brethren of the Croatian Dragon Society thought of a larger-scale celebration of the millennial anniversary, but they could not carry it out. With that, at their request, the clergy announced the ringing of bells for 1/4 hour and the lighting of bonfires for July 4th in the evening. And here it is advertised as such. There was a small problem with the teachers here, because they had to attend for the sake of the people, and yet they were afraid of (Svetozar) Pribičević. It seems that their hearts are troubled with the fact that the clergy is leading the way (...) After the evening mass, there was a bonfire lit in front of the Lourdes Chapel for the oldest Parishioners present: Mirko Zubak from Remete, Josip Gjurak from Gračani and Mija Dolovčak from Dolje. When the bonfire was lit, the people sang "Lijepa naša Domovino" and

¹³⁷ Stjepan Kos, "Tri nezaboravne uspomene sa pohoda Stjepana Radića u Gračane," *Uspomene i sjećanja na vođu i učitelja* (Zagreb: Naklada Slavske knjižare Stjepana i Marije Radić u Zagrebu, 1929.), 69-70.

¹³⁸ For more on the celebration of the millennial anniversary of the Kingdom of Croatia, see: Mario Jareb, *Kralj Tomislav kroz tisuć godina* (Zagreb: Despot infinitus, 2017.)

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁴⁰ See more about the life and work of Leopold Rusan in: Domagoj Novosel, "Život i djelovanje mons. Leopolda Rusana između dva svjetska rata," *Gazophylacium – časopis za znanost, kulturu, umjetnost i gospodarstvo* 19-21, nos. 1-4 (2014 – 2016): 313-337.

continued “*Oj Hrvati jošte živi*” and “*Još Hrvatska ni propala*”. The ceremony ended with the songs “*Do nebesa nek se ori*” and “*Zdravo Djevo svih milosti puna*”. The crowd sang by themselves, teachers didn’t want to sing because of Pribičević. After shouting Long live Croatia, the people went home.”¹⁴¹

As stated above, the teachers attended the actual celebration event, but did not actively participate in it. The pressure of Minister Pribičević on the one hand, and the majority of the people on the other, put them in an awkward position. In September 1925, *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac* from Gračani celebrated the millennial anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom in Gračani. On that occasion, the company in the chapel of St. Mihalja, placed a Memorial plaque with the Croatian coat of arms, and the Parish priest of Remet, Leopold Rusan, blessed it and gave a speech.¹⁴² The event itself was witnessed by Stanko Horvatin, who, as the author of the Podgorac Memorial, recorded in 1937: “The celebration of the thousandth anniversary of the Croatian kingdom took place in Gračani on September 20, 1925. The divine service was performed under a hundred-year-old linden tree near the chapel of St. Mihalja, by Zagreb canon, Janko Barla, with the assistance of the pastor of Šestine, Matija Miletić, and the priest of Remete, Leopold Rusan. On that occasion, the local honorable Mr. Leopold Rusan, the preast, delivered a beautiful and moving sermon to the people. In connection with this celebration, Podgorac installed in the chapel of St. Mihalja a Memorial plaque at a cost of 2,200 dinars”.¹⁴³

Even though they may not have always had the same political views and belonged to different social groups, the Head teacher Horvatin and the Remete Parish priest Rusan maintained good relations. The latter taught religious studies at the school in Gračani, while Horvatin regularly met the pastor half-way. This is best evidenced by the note that Rusan wrote during Horvatin’s retirement in 1937: “Teacher Stanko Horvatin was a prepared teacher in every aspect, especially towards the church, priest and children. I have not found such a hard-working teacher, and I don’t know if I ever will. He is the son of a teacher, his brother is a teacher, and one of his sons is also a teacher. Heartfelt congratulations to him!”¹⁴⁴

Horvatin mostly maintained good relations with the local authorities of the Administrative Municipality of Gračani – Remete as the founders of the school in Gračani. He had a particularly good relationship with the municipal

¹⁴¹ AŽR, Memorial of the Parish of Remete I. (1890. – 1929.), no numeration

¹⁴² D. Novosel, *Gračanska kronika*, p. 119.

¹⁴³ Stanko Horvatin, *Memorial trideset-godišnjice osnutka i opstanka Hrvatskog seljačkog pjevačkog društva Podgorac u Gračanima* (Zagreb: Podgorac, 1937.), p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ AŽR, Memorial of the Parish of Remete II. (1930. – 1963.), p. 57.

notary, Matija Šustić, who often advocated for the restoration and help of the school. Therefore, Horvatin praised him in the summer of 1928: “It is especially worth mentioning that the greatest effort and care for all these repairs were invested by the agile municipal notary, the administrator of the municipality of Gračani, Mr. Matija Šustić, a great friend of the school. Even though it was over a $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour walk from Remete to Gračani, he came almost daily to help the teacher and supervise the activities. With the greatest love and self-sacrifice for the school Gračani, he presented to the municipal committee the need for all the aforementioned repairs, and thus gained a lasting memory and the thanks of the management of this school. The gentleman supports this school and its needs at every opportunity. This shows that he correctly understands his duties.”¹⁴⁵

It is not known whether the relations between Croats and the municipal authorities cooled down in the later period, but one piece of information points us to that. Namely, in April 1931, a population census was conducted in Yugoslavia.¹⁴⁶ Stanko Horvatin was an enumerator in charge of the villages of Gračani, Dolje, Bliznec and Zvečaj. In total, he worked on the list for ten days, but the municipality did not want to compensate him for his work, which he resented.¹⁴⁷ In his public activities, Horvatin strongly advocated for the annexation of the Administrative Municipality of Gračani – Remeta to the City of Zagreb. He believed that urbanization would improve the life of the population of the entire municipality. For this purpose, he visited Zagreb mayors Vjekoslav Heinzl and Stjepan Srkulj several times with municipal deputations.¹⁴⁸ During his service in Gračani, Horvatin built good relations with the *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac*, whose headquarter was located next to the school building. In 1937, Horvatin wrote and *Podgorac* published his booklet under the title *Memorial of the Thirty-Year Anniversary of the Foundation and Endurance of the Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac in Gračani*. It was the society’s first monograph, published on the occasion of the society’s 30th anniversary. Although modest in content and format, consisting of only eleven pages of text and ten photographs, it was a kind of the crown of cooperation between Stanko Horvatin and the *Podgorac* society. How much society’s leadership valued Horvatin is best shown by the fact that he was entrusted with the writing of the monograph, even though at that moment he had not been on duty in Gračani for four years.

¹⁴⁵ AOŠG, Memorial, 64.

¹⁴⁶ For more about the population census in 1931 in the Administrative Municipality of Gračani – Remete, see: Novosel, *Jesen Prigorja – Stanovništvo Upravne općine Gračani – Remete 1918. – 1941.*

¹⁴⁷ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 72.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

Family life during service in Gračani

In the period between the two world wars, teachers lived with their families in apartments integrated into the school building. The teacher's apartment in Gračani had three rooms and was insufficient for a larger family.¹⁴⁹ Upon his arrival in Gračani in 1913, Horvatin found the school building and the apartment in solid condition. Already in the 1920s the building required numerous repairs. The main problem was that the school was built on the site of a former village puddle, with weak foundations, which caused constant walls deterioration and cracking.¹⁵⁰ During Horvatin's service in Gračani, in 1927 and 1928, major construction works were carried out at the school, the costs of which were borne by the local authorities, but they were carried out superficially, so as early as 1933, cracks in the walls and new damage appeared.¹⁵¹ The number of people in Stanko Horvatin's household varied between 1913 and 1933. At first, from 1913, his mother Bara lived with him, and in 1914, his brother Kamilo joined them, who left them in 1918. During his twenty-day military leave in May 1916, Horvatin met the teacher Katarina Kružić, who would replace him at his workplace during his absences. Their relationship was crowned by their marriage on December 13, 1919, in the church of St. Mary in Zagreb.¹⁵² Three children were born in their marriage: Stanko (born April 3, 1920), Berislav (born April 26, 1921) and Marijan (born June 15, 1922).¹⁵³ Berislav, their middle son, continued the family tradition of being a teacher. According to the state census from 1931 in the household of Stanko and Katarina Horvatin in Gračani, house no. 57, a total of six people lived there. Along with their already mentioned sons, 35-year-old Marija Slovenec, a native of Klanjec, worked as a maid in the household.¹⁵⁴ Considering that the teachers, just like the clergy in the countryside, lived with the property that had to be maintained, they often brought people from their native land and employed them as servants or auxiliary labor. Therefore, it is not surprising that Marija

¹⁴⁹ The demand for teachers, especially in the countryside, was very high, all the more so because some teachers refused employment in Gračani and Remete due to poor living conditions. For example, in April 1919, teacher Kostelić from Vrbovsko was appointed to Remete. However, he refused the offer due to the too small apartment and weak financial circumstances that could not support his fourteen children. Novosel, *Jesen Prigorja – Stanovništvo Upravne općine Gračani – Remete 1918. – 1941.*, 372.

¹⁵⁰ AOŠG, Memorial, 62-63.

¹⁵¹ Novosel, *Gračanska kronika*, 93.

¹⁵² HR-HDA-1448, Birth Register of the Parish of Klanjec, 47-48.

¹⁵³ HR-HDA-890, Employment record of Stanko Horvatin.

¹⁵⁴ HR-DAZG-19, Household lists from G to Z (Gračani, Remete, Zvečaj), Census of population, agricultural holdings and livestock from March 31, 1931, No 75

Slovenec was also from Klanjec, Horvatin's native region. The school orchard was planted with plums, peaches and walnuts, and the teacher cultivated a vineyard with 200 vines.¹⁵⁵ During and immediately after the First World War, fruits and vegetables from their own cultivation saved Horvatin and his family from starvation, and they supplemented their diet with honey from their own beehives.¹⁵⁶ The orchard and garden were not only used for growing teachers' food but also for practical teaching of students who acquired knowledge useful for their daily, village life. This is best evidenced by another memory of Mirko Banek, a student at the time: "The teacher taught us how to graft fruit trees and vines, and in the school orchard where there was a bee house, he showed us how bees work and collect honey. We always cleaned the school yard and orchard. Everything had to be clean and tidy. The teacher's wife, Katarina Horvatin, taught the children how to plant vegetables. All of these were good experiences that we benefited from".¹⁵⁷

Teachers in the countryside had the same worries as their fellow villagers, and in addition to all that, as an educated part of the community, they also performed a number of other tasks and jobs. But in its essence, their life was largely of a peasant character with all the advantages and disadvantages that it carried.¹⁵⁸ A big problem for Horvatin and his family was the apartment and classroom heating. The school and the apartment were located on the Isac hill, an outlying locality exposed to rain and strong north wind gusts from Medvednica. As the school building constantly deteriorated over time, and the insulation was poor, the heating of the apartment and the classroom was very problematic. Besides the bad condition of the school building, the procurement of firewood was also a problem. Almost every winter, Horvatin left notes on the issue of heating, and the one from 1921 best describes the context of the problem: "This year, the wood tax for teachers and schools has been increased to 1,000 kronen per bushel. The school is exposed to wind and drafts, and the ceilings are 4 meters high, so you have to keep stocking the fire in the winter! Heating the teacher's apartment is particularly difficult. Although the village

¹⁵⁵ *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac – Memorial 1907. – 1957.*, 51.

¹⁵⁶ AOŠG, Memorial, 72.

¹⁵⁷ Kolar – Dedović, ed, *100 godina škole u Gračanima*, 17.

¹⁵⁸ Velimir Deželić gave one of the best descriptions of the life of a teacher in a mountain village in his notes during a visit to Markuševac, the neighboring village of Gračani: "In the village of Markuševac, Božidar's uncle Andrija Širola was the head teacher. He was also a teacher and public educator, fruit grower, beekeeper, secretary of the Farmers' Cooperative, choir leader of the village singing and tambourine society and church organist (...) I could not have guessed that, when I first saw him with a torn shirt and rolled up sleeves, in pants soiled with dirt and in sandals on his bare feet. Velimir Deželić, *Kakvi smo bili? – Život zagrebačke obitelji od 1827. do 1953.*, book I. (Zagreb: Družba Braća Hrvatskoga Zmaja, 2011.), 606.

lies under Zagrebačka gora – there is a shortage of wood. The teacher does not have the right to cut wood in the Land Community of Gračani, so he procures wood from the forest of the Šestine estate. It seems that today and tomorrow wood will provide a lot of trouble to the teacher from Gračani.”¹⁵⁹

During Horvatin’s service in Gračani, the village, but also the entire municipality, was affected by modernization processes and tendencies to join the city of Zagreb. The municipal authorities worked most actively on the introduction of water supply and electrification. The issue of drinking water availability was particularly important to the teachers, so he himself joined the initial municipal committee for the construction of the water supply system. In addition, water was necessary to the teachers for garden irrigation, on which their diet largely depended. In his writings, Horvatin particularly complained about the aforementioned issue: “It was very difficult for teachers because of the water. The water source is under the mountain – quite far from the school. By the time the maid brought the water, at least half an hour had passed. When there was a drought, the teacher’s garden was ruined.”¹⁶⁰

Unfortunately for Horvatin, although all the preparatory work for the plumbing introduction in the school and the teacher’s apartment was done, it was only carried out after his departure from Gračani. The electrification of Gračani was carried out in 1933 at the moment when Horvatin was leaving his service, and the introduction of electricity to the school and the teacher’s apartment was also carried out immediately after his departure.¹⁶¹ Thus, Horvatin did not have the opportunity to enjoy what he wholeheartedly stood for, the modernization of the infrastructure.

Leaving the service in Gračani and departure

At the beginning of 1930s, Stanko’s wife Katarina fell ill. Due to constant trips to Zagreb for treatment, the distance from the city became an increasingly difficult factor in her teaching work, but also in her family life. Stanko’s and Katarina’s sons also started attending high school in Zagreb at the same time. The bus connection between Zagreb and Gračani was quite weak and very expensive at the time of the great economic crisis that affected all spheres of life. The option of walking to the tram on Gupčeva Zvijezda was also not the most convenient, since the distance was about 4 kilometers, which was

¹⁵⁹ AOŠG, Memorial, 72.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 79.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 79.

very tiring, especially in the autumn and winter months. Due to all of the above, the Horvatin couple decided in June 1932 to request a transfer to one of the Zagreb schools, which was however rejected by the competent ministry, with the explanation that all teaching positions in Zagreb were filled.¹⁶² Given that Katarina Horvatin's health was deteriorating, and she was not capable of teaching, she took sick leave on October 1, 1932 and moved with her sons to an apartment in Zagreb.¹⁶³ Horvatin did not give up on being transferred to Zagreb, but despite his efforts, he received rejections for teaching positions. Nevertheless, by the decision of the Ministry of Education on February 24, 1933, Horvatin was transferred to the service of the Education Department of the Banate of Sava.¹⁶⁴ He handed over his position in Gračani to the new teacher Zvonimir Tahmina on March 25, 1933.¹⁶⁵ Horvat's departure was very emotional, writing at the end in the school Memorial: "Stay with God, wonderful highland region."¹⁶⁶

The population of Gračani also emotionally experienced his departure and saw him off with all the honors during the entire journey until he left the village.¹⁶⁷ His departure from Gračani was not the end of his ties with the people and institutions of the entire region. He continued his cooperation with the *Croatian Peasant Singing Society Podgorac*, and on weekends he would visit Gračani picnic spots and inns. On July 6, 1933, after a long and serious illness, his wife Katarina Horvatin, a longtime teacher in Gračani, who spent her last days of life on treatment and sick leave, passed away. She was buried at the Mirogoj cemetery, and the funeral was attended by a large number of students from the Gračani school, as well as residents of Gračani, Remete and the surrounding villages.¹⁶⁸ With her passing, the last member of the Horvatin family, who worked and lived in the Gračani area for twenty years, said goodbye to the school in Gračani. Stanko Horvatin retired on December 24,

¹⁶² Ibid., 77-78.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 79.

¹⁶⁴ HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin, Decision of the Ministry of Education No. 13319. Horvatin was not overly satisfied with his service in the state administration; however, with constant effort he still managed to get a job at the Peščenica Boys' School in the fall of 1933.

¹⁶⁵ AOŠG, Memorial, p. 80.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 80.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 81.

1937.¹⁶⁹ He died in Zagreb on January 26, 1957 at the age of 77 and was buried in the family tomb on Zagreb's Mirogoj.¹⁷⁰

Conclusion

Teacher Stanko Horvatin (Klanjec, 1880 – Zagreb, 1957) marked a two-decade-long period in the history of Gračani and the surrounding villages of the Zagrebačko prigorje with his educational and social work. It was manifested not only in pedagogical work, but also in social engagement towards the institutions that at that time operated in the area of the Gračani – Remete administrative municipality. Cooperation with local civil and church authorities, cooperation with the singing association, involvement in the community during the construction and development of infrastructure, all of this was manifested in his work. His character and work are a true example of a teacher in the Croatian countryside between the two world wars. In that case, teachers were not only educators, but persons who, sometimes by their own will, and sometimes by legal provisions, did a much larger part of the work than what is understood today as a teacher's profession. In modest and difficult living conditions, which were not significantly different from other peasant households, more and much more was always expected from the teacher. He was many times the link between the peasants and the authorities, doctors and other institutions in which the peasants often did not trust. The character and work of Stanko Horvatin is interesting to observe in the context of the turbulent political turmoil of the time, in which teachers often had to choose between service and loyalty to the regime and popularity among the people. By all accounts, Horvatin skillfully balanced everything, as evidenced by his grades and advancements on the one hand, and the praise and emotions of students, peasants and clergy on the other.

¹⁶⁹ HR-HDA-890, Horvat – Hovanski 127/890., Employment record of Stanko Horvatin, Decision of the Ministry of Education No. 88049.

¹⁷⁰ According to the notice of the People's Committee of Trešnjevka Zagreb dated January 26, 1957. , No. 97. died in Zagreb on January 20, 1957. The notification is found as a note in the Register of Births of the Parish of Klanjec. HR-HDA-1448, Register of Births of the Parish of Klanjec, pp. 47-48.

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HR-DAZG-183: Državna mješovita pučka škola Gračani [State Mixed Public school Gračani]

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